

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-02

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO AMEMBASSY ANKARA NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL IZMIR NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA NIACT IMMEDIATE

SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9213

USIA WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE

USMISSION NATO NIACT IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 ATHENS 1642

USIAC

USIA FOR IPS, IBS, DESK OFFICER IEU

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:

SUBJECT: CLIFFORD MISSION: CLARK CLIFFORD DEPARTURE STATEMENT
AND Q-&-A WITH PRESS ON FEBRUARY 20.

I WISH TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY OF EXPRESSING MY APPRECIATION
TO YOUR GOVERNMENT, TO THE OFFICIALS OF YOUR GOVERNMENT--
PARTICULARLY THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE FOREIGN MINISTERS
FOR THE COURTESIES THAT THEY HAVE EXTENDED TO ME....

IN ADDITION TO THE FINE CONFERENCES WE HAVE HAD, I FELT
THAT THE DEGREE OF WARMTH OF THE HOSPITALITY THAT HAS BEEN EXTENDED
TO ME WAS SUCH THAT, THIS MORNING, I WENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER'S
APARTMENT--TOGETHER WITH OUR AMBASSADOR AND HIS LADY--AND
HAD A VERY PLEASANT VISIT WITH THE PRIME MINISTER. I THANKED
HIM PERSONALLY, NOT ONLY IN MY BEHALF BUT ON BEHALF OF OUR NEW
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PRESIDENT AND ALL THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES FOR THE
HOSPITALITY THAT HAS BEEN SHOWN ME....

IT DEMONSTRATES THE GREAT DEGREE OF FRIENDSHIP THAT CON-
TINUES TO EXIST BETWEEN THE PEOPLE OF GREECE AND THE PEOPLE
OF THE UNITED STATES. AND, AS A MATTER OF FACT, ONE OF THE MAIN
REASONS WHY PRESIDENT CARTER SENT ON THIS TRIP WAS TO ASSURE THE

PEOPLE OF GREECE OF OUR CONTINUING FRIENDSHIP. I THANK ALL OF YOU INDIVIDUALLY FOR THE COURTESY THAT YOU HAVE SHOWN ME WHILE I HAVE BEEN HERE.

I AM NOW READY TO TAKE QUESTIONS THAT ANY OF YOU MIGHT HAVE

QUESTION: AFTER YOU HEARD THE VIEWS OF THE GREEK GOVERNMENT, SIR, ARE YOU MORE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT FINDING A COMPROMISE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEMS CONCERNING THIS COUNTRY?

ANSWER: IT WOULD BE TOO EARLY IN OUR TRIP TO EXPRESS ANY PERSONAL OPINION. I KNOW ONLY THAT WE HAVE A MUCH BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROBLEMS THAT CONFRONT YOUR GOVERNMENT. WE'VE HAD A MOST INTIMATE AND CANDID EXCHANGE OF VIEWS, AND I THINK THAT SOME OF THE OPINIONS THAT HAVE BEEN FORMED BACK IN WASHINGTON WILL HAVE BEEN VARIED TO SOME EXTENT BY WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED HERE. I KNOW ONLY THAT THE SPIRIT OF COOPERATION THAT WAS EVIDENCED BY YOUR GOVERNMENT BODES WELL FOR THE FUTURE.

QUESTION: CAN WE HAVE YOUR IMPRESSIONS FROM THE BRIEFINGS BY THE GREEK GOVERNMENT AND, ESPECIALLY, BY THE PRIME MINISTER MR. CARAMANLIS?

ANSWER: YES, WE WERE GREATLY IMPRESSED BY THE GREAT CANDOR SHOWN BY YOUR PRIME MINISTER IN THE MEETING THAT WE HAD ANTICIPATED MIGHT LAST AN HOUR OR AN HOUR AND FIFTEEN MINUTES. IT LASTED THREE HOURS. AND, DURING THAT PERIOD OF TIME, ALL OF THE MAIN SUBJECTS THAT HAD BEEN REFERRED TO IN DISPATCHES BACK AND FORTH--MANY OF THEM REFERRED TO IN THE PRESS--EACH ONE UNCLASSIFIED

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WAS COVERED IN CONSIDERABLE DETAIL. AND THEN, LATER THAT DAY, WE HAD A LENGTHY MEETING WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND THE MEMBERS OF HIS STAFF.... AGAIN, EACH OF THE QUESTIONS THAT HAS TROUBLED THE GREEK GOVERNMENT WAS TAKEN UP SO THAT WE HAVE MORE DETAIL. AND WE HAVE OUR REPORTS NOW THAT WE WILL TAKE BACK TO PRESIDENT CARTER SO THAT HE WILL UNDERSTAND EVERY CONCERN THAT YOUR GOVERNMENT HAS ABOUT THE PRESENT POSTURE OF AFFAIRS.

QUESTION: SIR, AFTER YOU SPOKE WITH PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS ON FRIDAY, BOTH OF YOU MADE IMPROMPTU STATEMENTS.... SPEAKING BEFORE YOU, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT YOU HAD SPOKEN ON GENERAL AFFAIRS AND, IN PASSING, YOU HAD TALKED ABOUT NATO. THE SPEECH WAS SIMULTANEOUSLY TRANSLATED TO YOU AND (IN) THE IMPROMPTU STATEMENT YOU MADE, FROM THE FIRST SENTENCE YOU STRESSED NATO AND MORE OF LESS NOTHING ELSE. SOME OF US FELT THAT THERE WAS A CONFLICT THERE. COULD YOU COMMENT ON THAT, SIR?

ANSWER: IF THAT IMPRESSION WAS GIVEN, THEN I DID NOT USE THE

EXACT LANGUAGE THAT I SHOULD HAVE USED. THE MAJOR INTEREST WE HAD IN COMING TO GREECE IS TO FURTHER THE BILATERAL ARRANGEMENTS THAT EXIST. WE VALUE THE FRIENDSHIPS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF GREECE AND OF THE PEOPLE OF GREECE. WE ALSO DO HAVE AN INTEREST IN NATO. WE HAVE SUPPORTED NATO FOR 30 YEARS.... BUT WE UNDERSTAND THE ATTITUDE OF THE GREEK GOVERNMENT AND THEIR CONCERN REGARDING THE ALLIANCE. WE RESPECT THEIR POSITION IN THAT REGARD. SO, IF UNDUE EMPHASIS WAS PLACED UPON NATO, IT DID NOT TRULY REPRESENT THE NATURE OF THE TALKS THAT WE HAD. OF CUURSE, THERE WAS REFERENCE TO NATO BUT THAT BY NO MEANS WAS THE MAIN SUBJECT. IT WAS ONLY OF MINOR IMPORTANCE IN THE LONG SERIES OF PROBLEMS WHICH WE DISCUSSED.

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO AMEMBASSY ANKARA NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL IZMIR NIACT IMMEDIATE

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QUESTION: I WONDER IF YOU COULD GIVE US ANY SORT OF TIMETABLE....
FOR THE OPENING OF THE BASE TALKS BETWEEN GREECE AND THE UNITED STATES (AND) THE CLOSING OF THEM, THE PRESENTATION OF THE TWO DEFENSE AGREEMENTS BETWEEN GREECE AND THE UNITED STATES (AND BETWEEN) TURKEY AND THE UNITED STATES TO CONGRESS. DO YOU HAVE ANY PERSPECTIVES ON THAT?

ANSWER: IT WOULD BE UNWISE FOR ME TO SPECULATE, BECAUSE OF THE UNCERTAINTY THAT IS INHERENT IN ALL THOSE MATTERS. IT IS OUR HOPE THAT, AT SOME TIME WITHIN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS, THE NEGOTIATIONS MIGHT BE RESUMED. THAT MATTER WILL HAVE TO RECEIVE

CONSIDERATION OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS. IN SO FAR AS THE DEFENSE COOPERATION AGREEMENTS ARE CONCERNED.... THEY WILL BE INVOLVED IN THE STUDY OF THE POLICY THAT PRESIDENT CARTER WILL MAKE. AS I HAVE EXPLAINED BEFORE, THE PURPOSE OF THIS MISSION IS TO FIND OUT: 1) THE FACTS THAT EXIST THAT HAVE CAUSED THE DIFFICULTY.... (2) THE ATTITUDES OF THE DIFFERENT GOVERNMENTS THAT ARE INVOLVED.... AND 3) TO ASCERTAIN IN WHICH AREAS THE UNITED STATES CAN

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BE HELPFUL TO THE NATIONS INVOLVED IN WORKING OUT THE DIFFICULTIES. I DO NOT HAVE A CLEAR CONCEPT WITH REFERENCE TO THE TIMETABLE. AND THE REASON FOR THAT IS THAT, AFTER WE RETURN AND SUBMIT OUR REPORT TO PRESIDENT CARTER, THEN HE AND HIS SENIOR ADVISERS WILL TAKE CONSIDERABLE TIME IN FORMULATING THE POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES. THERE HAS BEEN A POLICY IN THE PAST. HE WILL WISH TO REVIEW THAT AND DETERMINE WHETHER OR NOT HE WISHES TO MAKE ANY CHANGES OR AMENDMENTS IN OUR POLICIES OF THE FUTURE.

QUESTION: AFTER TALKING TO THE GREEK LEADERS, DO YOU STILL FIND.... GREEK-TURKISH DISPUTES.... SO DIFFICULT TO RESOLVE? OR WON'T YOU GIVE US AN IMPRESSION OR (YOUR) OPINION....ON ALL THESE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY?

ANSWER: I BELIEVE THAT THE GENERAL IMPRESSION THAT WE RECEIVED WAS THAT MORE SERIOUSNESS AND GRAVITY WAS ATTACHED TO THE PROBLEMS EXISTING BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY THAN WE HAVE BEEN AWARE OF BACK IN WASHINGTON. THE PRIME MINISTER, IN CAREFUL DETAIL, TOLD US OF EACH OF THE AREAS THAT HAVE BEEN CAUSING DIFFICULTY.... SO THAT WE NOW HAVE A MUCH BETTER IMPRESSION OF THOSE PROBLEMS--AND THE ATTITUDES EXPRESSED WITH REFERENCE TO THOSE PROBLEMS-- THAN WE HAD BEFORE. I THINK WE DO FEEL A NEW SENSE OF SERIOUSNESS REGARDING THOSE DIFFICULTIES AND WE SHALL IMPART THAT THOUGHT TO PRESIDENT CARTER WHEN WE RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES.

QUESTION: SIR, DOES THE REVIEW OF.... POLICY INCLUDE PERHAPS A REVIEW OF THE EXISTING AND INITIALLED AGREEMENTS WHICH HAVE NOT YET BEEN RATIFIED BY CONGRESS? THAT ONE WITH TURKEY AND THE ONE... PERHAPS EVEN THE DEFENSE PRINCIPLES AGREED.... BETWEEN MR. BITSIOS AND MR. KISSINGER?

ANSWER: IT IS MY BELIEF THAT, BECAUSE PRESIDENT CARTER COMES IN AS A NEW PRESIDENT.... HE WILL GIVE AN OVERVIEW TO THE ENTIRE RELATIONSHIP OF THE UNITED STATES WITH BOTH GREECE AND TURKEY. SO, I THINK THAT THERE WILL BE CONFERENCES IN THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH OF GOVERNMENT. I THINK THERE WILL BE....

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CONFERENCES BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT
AND KEY MEMBERS OF OUR CONGRESS.... I THINK HE DOES NOT FEEL
BOUND BY WHATEVER EFFORTS HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN THE PAST.
I THINK THAT HE WILL CONSIDER ALL THAT EXISTS AND THEN HE
WILL START AND BUILD HIS OWN FOREIGN POLICY WITH REFERENCE TO
THE EASTERN MEDITERRANENA.. AS HE THINKS IT BEST FITTED TO
ASSIST THE NATIONS IN THIS AREA OF THE WORLD TO LIVE IN
PEACE AND STABILITY AND TRANQUILITY.

QUESTION: SIR, AS OF FRIDAY NIGHT--AMONG SOME GREEK PRESS
CIRCLES--RUMORS HAVE BEEN CIRCULATING THAT YOUR WILL RETURN..
TO ATHENS NEAR THE END OF THE WEEK. I VERIFIED, THROUGH OUR
CORRESPONDENT IN WASHINGTON, THAT -- EVEN BEFORE YOUR DEPARTURE
FROM WASHINGTON -- THE POSSIBILITY WAS TALKED ABOUT THERE.
IS IT TRUE THAT YOU ARE RETURNING? IF SO, WHY? AND WHY IS IT
BEING KEPT SECRET?

ANSWER: I MUST SAY, ONE OF THE INTERESTING EXPERIENCES IN A
MISSION OF THIS KIND IS, OCCASIONALLY, TO READ STATEMENTS IN THE
NEWSPAPERS WHICH COME TO YOU AS A COMPLETE SURPRISE. WE HAVE
NO PLANS TO RETURN TO GREECE AFTER OUR VISIT TO TURKEY AND CYPRUS.
I BELIEVE THE RUMOR MAY HAVE STARTED BECAUSE, ALTHOUGH WE
LEAVE NICOSIA ON FRIDAY, OUR SCHEDULE INDICATES THAT WE ARE NOT
DUE IN LONDON UNTIL MONDAY. AND I THINK PERHAPS SOMEONE
LEAPED TO THE CONCLUSION THAT WE MIGHT COME BACK TO GREECE.
THE FACT IS A PURELY REALISTIC ONE. WE WERE SETTING ASIDE A
DAY AND A HALF OR TWO DAYS TO WORK ON OUR REPORT THAT
WE WILL TAKE BACK TO PRESIDENT CARTER. BECAUSE ONCE WE GET
BACK, I ASSURE YOU, WE WILL BE AT THE BECK AND CALL OF BOTH THE
EXECUTIVE AND THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCHES (OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT).
AND WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE OUR REPORT COMPLETED BEFORE WE GO
BACK.

THANK YOU ALL VERY MUCH AGAIN FOR YOUR COURTESY.
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Message Attributes

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TAGS: PFOR, OVIP, GR, US, (CLIFFORD, CLARK M)
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